



Germany: Facts & Figures September 2007

A monthly overview of current opinion data and statistical information in the Federal Republic of Germany

Politics

If Bundestag elections would be held September 30, the CDU/CSU would receive 39% of the vote, the SPD 26%, the Green Party 10%, the FDP 11%, the Left Party 12%, and all other parties combined 4%. (Forsa. 09/26/07)

An opinion poll on the reputation of politicians revealed that only 5% of the respondents know what a politician really does, while 95% had no idea. 14% believe Bundestag parliamentarians know about everyday life and the concerns of their voters, while 85% think the Bundestag members have no idea. 87% wanted to know more about the political life of the Bundestags members and 6% about their private life." (Die Zeit. 09/06/07)

Economy

In September, the unemployment rate dropped to 8.4% (August: 8.8%). The number of unemployed dropped by 162,000 to 3,543,000. This is the lowest unemployment rate for September in 15 years. (Federal Employment Agency. 09/27/07)

Investors' confidence in Germany dropped more than expected for the second month in a row, pushed down by continued worries over the U.S. subprime mortgage crisis. The ZEW institute monthly index dropped to minus 18.1 points in September from minus 6.9 points in August and 10.4 in July. (Handelsblatt, 09/19/07)

An increasing number of jobs depends on exports. In 2006, 8.9 million jobs or 23% of all gainfully employed people were dependent on such job. This figure is up from 5.7 million jobs or 15% of all gainfully employed people in 1995. (Federal Statistical Office. FAZ, 09/19/07)

Society

23% of the people in Sachsen Anhalt want the former GDR back. 96% stated that "not everything in the former GDR was bad." 90% said that "as far as private matters were concerned, people could live well in the former GDR." 84% feel that social relations have deteriorated, and 75% said the same for child care. However, 79% also said that democracy is "the best of all state ideas" (Sachsen-Anhalt Monitor. Die Welt, 09/25/07)

66% of Germans believe that unemployment is the country's greatest problem, followed by poverty with 17% and social problems (16%). 7% said the fight against terrorism is the greatest problem. (Forsa. Die Welt, 09/17/07)

Germans continue to rely on their local newspapers and the public radio stations when gathering information. 60% said they fully or overwhelmingly trust their local newspapers; 53% said they have great confidence in the public radio stations (31% in privately-run radio stations and 26% in commercial TV stations). Only 20% trust information from the Internet. In the age group of 14 to 29-year-olds, 32% trust the Internet, while 50% trust the local paper. (Emnid. Handelsblatt, 09/14/07)

75,800 German students were enrolled at foreign institutions of higher education in 2005, a 14% increase from 2004. The three most popular countries of destination in 2005 were the Netherlands (15.7% of all German students abroad), the United Kingdom (15.3%) and Austria (13.4%), followed by the United States (11.6%), Switzerland (10.3%) and France (9.1%). Those six countries together admitted some 75% of the Germans studying abroad. (Federal Statistical Office. 09/12/07)

The birth rate in Germany dropped from an average of 1.34 children per woman to 1.33, the lowest level since the mid 1990s. In 2006, 672,700 children were born in Germany. (Federal Statistics Office. 09/10/07)

73% of Germans consider Russia a threat concerning its role as energy supplier. 76% expressed their concern about a weakened democracy in Russia. (GMF Poll. Major dailies, 09/07/07)

54% of Germans believe that transatlantic relations will not change after Americans elect a new president next year. 58% of Germans hold the opinion that the European Union should cooperate more closely with the United States to counter global threats. (German Marshall Fund. Major papers, 09/07/07)

20% of Germans would like to emigrate to countries in western or southern Europe. More than 50% Germans prefer other countries to Germany. 30% said job reasons would prompt them to leave Germany, and for more than 50% in the age group under 30 the search for a new job was the most important reason to leave Germany. (Allensbach. Sueddeutsche, 09/06/07)

52% of Germans said they are in favor of withdrawing German troops from Afghanistan, and 43% said the Bundeswehr should stay in the Hindu Kush. Two years ago, 60% of Germans supported the mission. (Forsa. Stern, 09/10/07)

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